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# COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

## Report of the Secretary-General

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. On 12 December 1996, the General Assembly adopted, without a vote, resolution 51/57 entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe". By that resolution, the Assembly, acknowledging the increasing contribution of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security in its region through activities in early warning, preventive diplomacy, crisis management, arms control and disarmament, post-crisis stabilization and rehabilitation measures, welcomed the intensified cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and OSCE over the previous year, and requested the Secretary-General to continue exploring with the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE possibilities for further enhancement of cooperation, information exchange and coordination.

2. By the same resolution, the General Assembly decided to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-second session the item entitled "Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe", and requested the Secretary-General to submit to it, at that session, a report on the implementation of the resolution. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request.

## II. MEASURES OF COOPERATION BETWEEN THE UNITED NATIONS AND THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE

3. On 26 May 1993, letters were exchanged between the Secretary-General and the Chairman-in-Office of the Council of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (see A/48/185, annexes I and II). By those letters, the

signatories accepted the arrangements described in the framework for cooperation and coordination between the two organizations (A/48/185, annex II, appendix).

4. By resolution 48/5 of 22 October 1993, the General Assembly decided to invite the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (subsequently known as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe)[1] to participate in the sessions and work of the Assembly in the capacity of observer.

5. The observer status of OSCE and the framework agreement referred to in paragraph 3 above constitute the institutional parameters of cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE.

6. As noted in the previous reports of the Secretary-General on cooperation and coordination with OSCE submitted to the Assembly at its forty-eighth, forty-ninth, fiftieth and fifty-first sessions (A/48/549, A/49/529, A/50/564 and A/51/489 and Add.1), good contacts have been established and maintained between the Secretary-General and the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE. The Secretary-General has met regularly with both the Chairman-in-Office and the Secretary-General of OSCE, and their representatives meet United Nations officials on a regular basis at United Nations Headquarters and at the United Nations Office at Geneva. Senior United Nations representatives have taken part in meetings of the Permanent Council of OSCE. A senior representative of the Secretary-General attended and addressed the most recent OSCE summit meeting of Heads of State or Government which took place at Lisbon on 2 and 3 December 1996.

7. In continuation of the informal understanding that there should be a division of labour between the two organizations, the United Nations has retained the lead in peacemaking efforts in Tajikistan and in Abkhazia, Georgia, while OSCE has had the lead in the Republic of Moldova, South Ossetia, Georgia, and in the conflict over Nagorny Karabakh, Azerbaijan. Specific efforts have been made to improve contacts and cooperation in the field, at the negotiating table and between the respective headquarters. These steps have resulted in enhanced coordination with the aim of making better use of the resources of the international community in the interests of the countries being assisted.

8. During the past year, cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE has been evident at a variety of levels.

9. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), together with OSCE and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), organized the 1st meeting, at Geneva on 2 July 1997, of the Steering Group of the Regional Conference to Address the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Other Forms of Involuntary Displacement and Returnees in the Countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States and Relevant Neighbouring States. The Steering Group is the main intergovernmental monitoring body, composed of Member States, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations, set up to evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action adopted by the Regional Conference in May 1996 (see A/51/489, para. 10). Reports of activities carried out by UNHCR, IOM and OSCE were presented at the meeting, which was attended by 45 Member States, 25 international organizations and 73 non-governmental organizations.

10. In the follow-up to the Regional Conference, UNHCR and OSCE, in particular the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) and the High Commissioner on National Minorities, have further enhanced cooperation on questions related to human and minority rights, conflict prevention, conflict resolution and the return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons in the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). As new joint initiatives, UNHCR and OSCE/ODIHR are cooperating in the follow-up to the Regional Conference in the organization of an expert group meeting on the registration and residence permit (propiska) procedures in the countries of CIS; they are also involved in the joint organization of non-governmental organization task forces, the development of non-governmental organization legislation and the joint production of a newsletter, CISCONF News.

11. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees is working with OSCE/ODIHR and the OSCE field mission to Georgia in preparing for the return of Ossetians to their homes in Georgia. Similar cooperation is envisaged in Tajikistan. Areas of mutual interest between UNHCR and the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in the countries of CIS include questions of nationality and citizenship, in particular with regard to the return and reintegration of formerly deported peoples.

12. An exchange of information between UNHCR and OSCE is maintained on issues of mutual interest and cooperation. Such exchanges contribute towards ensuring coordinated and complementary action between the two organizations and include regular briefings by UNHCR to the Permanent Council of OSCE, at the invitation of the Chairman-in-Office.

13. In January 1997, informal high-level tripartite consultations were held at Geneva between the United Nations, OSCE and the Council of Europe under the chairmanship of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva. The International Committee of the Red Cross and IOM also participated. Issues discussed were the former Yugoslavia, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and the follow-up to the Regional Conference held in May 1996.

14. The tripartite gathering, the sixth in a series launched in July 1993, represented a further advance in the informal process of sharing of information, improving coordination, avoiding duplication and optimizing the utilization of scarce resources. Such meetings have proven effective in establishing new channels of communication and bridging differences in the institutional cultures. They have also helped to ensure the active participation of OSCE institutions (including the Chairman-in-Office) and of the Council of Europe in a regular dialogue with Geneva-based humanitarian organizations.

15. Participants at the meeting in January 1997 agreed that, despite the ongoing cooperation in the regions under discussion, there was room for further mutually supportive action, in particular in the areas of democracy-building, the rule of law, constitutional matters and minority rights. They also agreed that contacts should be further developed with international economic and financial institutions, for example, through seminars conducted by OSCE and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), respectively. Finally, it was agreed that an effort should be made to enhance the sharing of information through electronic and other means.

16. A target-oriented meeting on the Caucasus will be held at Vienna in November 1997, at the invitation of OSCE. The next high-level tripartite consultations will also be chaired by OSCE.

17. The Economic Commission for Europe works closely with the OSCE Economic Forum and, on a continuing basis, provides support to the OSCE secretariat regarding economic dimensions of security in Europe. Consultations are under way between ECE and OSCE on establishing a system for the exchange of information on programmes and advance planning on a regular basis.

18. With regard to the former Yugoslavia, the Peace Implementation Conference, held in London on 4 and 5 December 1996, requested OSCE to supervise the municipal elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which took place on 13 and 14 September 1997. The United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), within the framework of its mandate, cooperates closely with the OSCE Mission and supported OSCE in organizing the elections in accordance with the pattern of cooperation set during the September 1996 elections, when monitors of the United Nations International Police Task Force (IPTF) assisted OSCE and were deployed throughout the country on election day, monitoring and providing guidance to local police forces.

19. On 14 February 1997, the Arbitral Tribunal on Brcko placed that area under temporary international supervision. Following that decision, IPTF increased its strength by some 200 personnel for tasks resulting from the Brcko Arbitration Award. An OSCE centre was also opened in Brcko, with a view to fostering common goals in the implementation of the Arbitration Award and strengthening the presence of OSCE in the Brcko area.

20. Field offices of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights continue to maintain constructive cooperation with OSCE missions in countries in the territory of the former Yugoslavia. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights have consulted with OSCE on legal reform programmes and participated in OSCE-organized training seminars for local police. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia, information is regularly exchanged among human rights missions. The staff of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights are in frequent contact with the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities concerning matters throughout the region, notably developments in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

21. In the wake of the political crisis that engulfed Albania in the early part of 1997, cooperation between OSCE and various United Nations agencies became imperative. While from the outset of the crisis the political lead in the situation in Albania remained with OSCE (which was also in the lead in supervising the 29 June parliamentary elections), the mandate of the multinational protection force in place from March to August 1997 was authorized by the Security Council in its resolutions 1101 (1997) of 28 March 1997 and 1114 (1997) of 19 June 1997. In this connection, cooperation between OSCE and the World Food Programme, as well as the United Nations Children's Fund, was crucial in ensuring the prompt delivery of humanitarian assistance to needy Albanians.

22. After the establishment of the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) in early 1996, and the decision of the Permanent Council of OSCE on 18 April 1996 to establish a mission in the Republic of Croatia, UNTAES and OSCE have cooperated in various spheres, especially as regards confidence-building and reconciliation, as well as the development of democratic institutions, processes and mechanisms at the municipal and district/county levels. During the period under review, the Transitional Administrator held several meetings with the OSCE Secretary-General and, on various occasions, briefed the Permanent Council on the work of UNTAES. At the working level in the field, OSCE representatives participated in the weekly meetings of various UNTAES joint working groups. The OSCE Head of Mission at various times chaired meetings of the UNTAES joint working group on human rights. Two other areas of cooperation between UNTAES and OSCE related to the monitoring of the implementation of Croatian legislation and agreements on two-way returns of all refugees and displaced persons and on the protection of the rights and protection of persons belonging to national minorities, as well as in the elections conducted in April.

23. The Electoral Unit of UNTAES established and maintained a close working relationship with the OSCE office in the region during the entire electoral process in Eastern Slavonia. Representatives of OSCE were regularly invited as observers in the Joint Implementation Committee on Elections which, as the main policy and decision-making body for the elections in the region, shaped the framework for the local elections held for the region on 13 and 14 April 1997. In the final phase, representatives of OSCE/ODIHR established a field presence in the UNTAES-administered region in order to prepare for the observation of the election and worked closely with the field offices of the Electoral Unit. On election day, 30 OSCE/ODIHR observers were included in and supported by the UNTAES security and communication structure. The public statement of OSCE on the local elections was simultaneously submitted to the Transitional Administrator and the OSCE Secretary-General. Further, UNTAES has cooperated closely with OSCE in planning for the OSCE presence in the region at the end of the UNTAES mandate in 1998.

24. In Georgia, the Secretary-General's Special Representative is in frequent contact with the OSCE Head of Mission at Tbilisi. The United Nations office for the protection and promotion of human rights in Abkhazia, Georgia, was opened at Sukhumi, on 10 December 1996. A memorandum of understanding concerning the office was signed by the Officer-in-Charge of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the OSCE Secretary-General on 25 April 1997; in accordance with that memorandum, OSCE agreed to deploy a member of its mission in Georgia, experienced in human rights work, to the office. The officer contributed by OSCE will be deployed to the office once financial arrangements have been finalized between the United Nations and OSCE. In the meantime, the designated OSCE officer has been through an orientation programme at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at Geneva and visits the office at Sukhumi on a regular basis.

25. The United Nations and OSCE have continued to cooperate closely in Tajikistan for an early political solution of the conflict. The inter-Tajik negotiating process, where OSCE representatives acted as observers, resulted in the signing, on 27 June 1997, of the General Agreement on the Establishment of

Peace and National Accord in Tajikistan. Representatives of OSCE signed the Protocol on Guarantees and are participating in the work of the Contact Group, which was established at Dushanbe in accordance with the above-mentioned Protocol and is comprised of representatives of eight observer countries, OSCE and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. The United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) has continued to interact closely with the OSCE mission in the country, which has concentrated on the promotion of human rights, democratic institution-building and protection of Tajik returnees in the southern province of Khatlon. The United Nations and OSCE are closely coordinating efforts to facilitate the implementation of the General Agreement. A human rights needs-assessment mission of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, conducted in June 1997 at the request of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, consulted at length with staff of the OSCE mission with a view to coordinating human rights-related activities.

26. In summary, cooperation and coordination between the United Nations and OSCE have further improved in the past year. There is now a wide range of activities in which the two organizations have developed cooperative arrangements, and efforts to enhance this relationship will continue.

## Notes

[1] At the Summit of CSCE Heads of State and Government, held at Budapest on 5 and 6 December 1994, it was agreed to change the name of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), as of 1 January 1995 (see A/49/800).

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